

FEB 1952 04-0000

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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SECURITY INFORMATION**INFORMATION REPORT**

REPORT

CD. NO.

COUNTRY East Germany

DATE DISTR. 1 September 1952

SUBJECT Ministry of Health Meeting

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DATE OF
INFO.NO. OF ENCLS.
(LISTED BELOW)PLACE
ACQUIREDSUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.

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1. On 14 February 1952 there was a meeting in the DDR Ministry of Health

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3. Dr. Mette opened the meeting by emphasizing the purpose of ZAFIT in calling this meeting, which was the initiation of better working relations between ZAFIT, the Ministry of Health and the individual centers where research was being carried out. Dr. Mette also stressed the importance of the Five-Year Economic Plan and the sections of it applicable to those assembled. The sections indicated were those involving the investigation and combatting of tuberculosis, tumorous afflictions, infant mortality, and occupational and rheumatic diseases.
4. Dr. Mette then made the point that he feared that the change in procedure, whereby research tasks would now go to the State Secretariat for Higher Education (Staatsekretariat fuer Hochschulwesen) and to the Laender, could only result in an unfortunate loss of direct contact between the Ministry of Health and the research centers.
5. Dr. Burghardt, in replying that Dr. Mette's fears were unfounded, made clear what the latter had meant. Research requests from universities, when of interest to the Ministry of Health, had previously been channelled to ZAFIT through that Ministry directly. In the future, however, the universities would have to submit such research proposals to ZAFIT through the State Secretariat for Higher Education, to which all DDR universities are subordinate. Similarly, research institutes controlled by a Land government would now submit their proposals to ZAFIT through the Land government and not through the Ministry of Health.
6. Dr. Burghardt also pointed out that, although the organizational work in relevant research was to remain in the hands of the Zentralamt fuer Forschung und Technik, the scientific preparation, responsibility, and coordination was to be administered by the Ministry of Health. In concluding, Dr. Burghardt stressed the importance of sending forms and reports to ZAFIT by the dates specified.¹
7. The meeting was then thrown open to general discussion and the following main points emerged:
 - a. Literature. Many of the research workers complained of the lack of specialized literature, particularly western literature. It was pointed out that the procurement of this literature was the special task of the Central Office for Scientific Literature (Zentralstelle fuer wissenschaftliche Literatur).²
 - b. Apparatus. Several workers complained of the difficulties caused by lack of proper apparatus. Prof. Schlomka, for example, spoke of the poor production of X-Ray apparatus. Dr. Burghardt suggested that the research workers prepare a written report on these deficiencies, as ZAFIT was not in a position to act unless it had proof.³
 - c. Working parties. In response to several suggestions, Dr. Mette proposed the formation of twelve working parties (Arbeitskreise) for the investigation and combatting of rheumatic diseases, tuberculosis, tumorous afflictions, infant mortality, occupational diseases, heart and circulatory diseases, diabetes, virus diseases, blood diseases, and research in hygiene, physiology, and heart and circulatory surgery.

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Comments:

1. Zentralamt fuer Forschung und Technik (ZAFT). The remarks are interesting in the light of a further, published, statement. A propaganda booklet "Unser Volkswirtschaftsplan 1952 - Bericht von der Volkskammersitzung am 6 und 7 Februar 1952" (Our Economic Plan, 1952; Report of the Volkskammer Meeting of 6 and 7 February 1952) states:

"The plan for research and development includes, in 1952, 3,590 assignments. . . . This plan is divided into four parts:

- a. Research work.
- b. Constructive development (konstruktive Entwicklungen).
- c. Development of processes.
- d. Development of mechanization and conversion to automatic working.

ZAFT will directly guide and oversee the research assignments. Appropriate specialist ministries are, for the first time this year, fully responsible for the development assignments."

2. Address: Berlin NW7, Unter den Linden 8.
3. Apparatus procurement is usually thought to be the duty of the Zentralstelle fuer Forschungsbedarf (Central Office for Research Requirements), Berlin NW 7, Unter den Linden 68-70. This passage may well indicate a close relation between ZAFT and this Zentralstelle.

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